

Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel Meeting #24
Office of Environment and Heritage, 52 Wingewarra Street Dubbo
Teleconference
24 March 2015

Present:

Chair: Stephen Wolter, Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH)
Brad Purcell, Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH)
Jackie Letfallah, Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH)
Greg Bates, Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia (KIAA)
Lachlan Gall, Pastoralists Association of West Darling (PAWD)
David O'Shannessy, (RSPCA NSW)
Greg Markwick, Department of Primary Industries (DPI)
Ray Borda, Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia (KIAA) (only attended briefly [5-minutes])

Adoption of Minutes of Meeting # 23

Lachlan Gall (PAWD) raised concern that Item 4: Review of the Program, section 'Joint Discussion on results', dot point number 4 did not accurately reflect the views of different panel members pertaining to the removal of the Fauna Dealer cap. Greg Bates agreed that the dot point would be more accurate if it was modified to also indicate that some panel members would support and encourage the removal of the cap. Greg Bates supports current industry stakeholders operating under the existence of the cap, but acknowledged that there is a split view of the potential disadvantages and benefits the removal of the cap could potentially have on to the industry as a whole. Panel members agreed that the minutes could be ratified on the provision that this dot point would be modified to reflect all panel members views about the proposed Fauna Dealer cap removal.

The minutes were ratified. Moved by Lachlan Gall. Seconded Greg Bates

Adoption of Agenda of Meeting # 24

Adopted by Lachlan Gall

Item 1. Review of actions from meeting #23

Action 1: Stephen will email the draft Quota Report to the Panel members. Any comments need to be back to OEH by COB 24 November 2014. This document is draft only and not yet a public document.

Done.

Action 2: Stephen will take this up with Compliance and get back to the Harvesters Association

Done. Stephen addressed these compliance issues with Arthur Snook from the compliance team who then liaised directly with John Farr. Greg Bates was dissatisfied with the informalities of the discussions and asked that OEH address the issues raised in a formal written response to the Harvesters Association. This will form action 1 in the minutes from meeting # 24.

Action 3: Stephen will ask Arthur Snook (Team Leader Compliance) to the next meeting.

Done. OEH Compliance unit was invited to attend KMAP meetings however a representative from compliance was not available for this meeting.

Action 1: Stephen Wolter will send a formal letter to the NSW Harvesters Associate addressing the issues raised by the Harvesters Association in the previous minutes.

Item 2: 2014 tag allocation and harvest update

- Allocation to date is 106,000 animals which is 4% of the quota
- Take is 43,000 animals – 2% of the quota
- The take is the lowest it has been for 10-20 years
- There has been no commercial take in the South East NSW zone to date
- The take is so low that it has no impact on the population and it will probably remain low if no further markets are found.

Industry Update

- Markets (Russia market)
 - Greg Bates (KIAA) commented that the lower take figures in 2015 compared to 2014 could be contributed to the fact that Macro Meats were still exporting product to Russia early 2014 which is no longer the case. Greg expanded saying that it was highly unlikely this market would resume due to the Ukraine issues on trade and the ceasing of Cattle into that market.
 - Ray Borda (KIAA) advised the panel that he had just finished a meeting with the Prime Minister of Australia. The meeting discussed the very real likelihood of opening new markets into China and India. Ray said that the information is highly confidential. The biggest challenge to opening in these markets has been opposition from animal welfare groups, however a contact they have established within China is working through these issues.
 - Stephen Wolter (OEH) advised that he and all other state program managers had recently met with the Trade Assessment branch of the Commonwealth about the ‘Sunset Clause’ in California. If the clause is extended then product demands into the USA may increase.

Item 3: Draft Annual Report

- The report is still in draft and any comments for change must be submitted by the 27 March 2015.
- Stephen Wolter (OEH) discussed the various tables through the report. The report highlights an overall strong kangaroo harvest of male only take. Males equate to 92% of the total take. The Wallaroo species are the highest percentage of male biased shooting. Average carcase weights are stable over the past 2 years.
- There is a difficulty in reporting on Non-commercial culling due to the issuing of non-commercial licences and backend reporting on the numbers of kangaroos actually culled. All non-commercial culling is now handled solely by National Parks and Wildlife (NPW). In late 2014 NPW streamlined the non-commercial program via the creation and use of a new licensing database. Whilst the new system gives a better overall picture of the numbers of non-commercial tags being

- issued, NPW has limited ability to enforce the reporting of culling from landholders due to lack of resources and compliance enforcement options.
- Monitoring of compliance has been detailed in the report and shows 6 Penalty Infringement Notices (PIN's) having been issued. 162 chiller premise inspections were carried out. However this is below the average required by the management plan. For the first time the report details written and verbal cautions issued as well NSW Food Authority inspections conducted. No licence cancellations, prosecutions, surveillance operations or research projects were carried out during 2014.
 - The numbers of harvesters, operating chillers and total take during 2014 directly correlates to the reduced and pressured nature of the market that the product is operating within as a whole.
 - Lachlan Gall (PAWD) highlighted 2 display errors on tables on page 14, 15 and 16. Stephen Wolter will amend the tables. Stephen Wolter advised that the format this information is presented in the annual report is a historical format, however we will look at investigating new formats to present information in the next annual report to make the display and interpretation of the data easier.

Action 2: Stephen will make changes to display of information on graphs on pages 14, 15 & 16 of the annual report

Item 4: Update of Review of Program

- **Options Paper – Kangaroo Management Program Reform – Brad Purcell OEH**

- Brad advised that the program is currently being reviewed to find ways to reduce red tape and costs and to find efficiencies in the delivery of the Program.
- This options paper was presented to the Chief Executive Committee of OEH in February. The Kangaroo Management Program is being reviewed following the report by Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) which highlighted licensing issues within the Kangaroo Management Program that currently impede business due to red tape. The committee agreed to the directions within the paper and determined that legislative reform of the program would be conducted in line with the Biodiversity Review. It was explained that a timeframe cannot be given at this stage as this review forms a small part of a larger review and will be dependent upon the progression and direction that is taken with the Biodiversity Review and the results of the upcoming State government election.
- The main findings related to:
 - Accuracy testing (such as moving to a nationally accredited standard for use in all states and territories or reduction in the frequency of re-accreditation)
 - Animal welfare (pertaining to the increase in non-commercial culling due to the drop in the commercial market)
 - Use of technology (an upgrade to the platform for the licensing database KMS. Creation of a smart phone program for stakeholders to be able to apply for tags or complete reporting obligations online)
 - Property specific tag system (transition to a zone based issuing of tags to reduce the restrictive nature of property specific tags)
 - Potential removal of both the S121 Occupiers licence and S124 Fauna Dealer Wholesaler licences to reduce administrative burden on stakeholders and create opportunities for new markets.

- Brad Purcell (OEH) further discussed how the review would base its regulatory framework upon a risk based approach. This approach categorises risk four ways -
 - Exempt
 - Complying
 - Assessable
 - Prohibited

Brad gave an example of skin only shooting as currently being assessed within the current plan as prohibited. The move towards a risk based approach is to develop an adaptive regulatory framework for better reporting and to identify and target resources where the risk is greatest.

- The panel was presented with a diagram displaying kangaroo breeding findings which is currently used by Lee Rhiannon from The Greens to denigrate commercial kangaroo harvesting. Whilst the diagram is technically correct in certain drought conditions (originating from a research project at Fowlers Gap) it is not presented or explained in context. The limited breeding cycle is only applicable in small captive populations (less than 50 animals) and does not apply to populations in the wild. This example was presented to highlight that select or misleading information is being widely distributed by those in opposition to the industry.

- **Joint discussion on results**

- **Greg Bates requested notification to KMAP a list of people who sit on the OEH Chief Executive Committee.**

- Lachlan Gall (PAWD) raised concern in removing the S121 Occupiers licence and non -property specific tags. He said it would mean that landholders would lose their assurance of tags being utilised on their properties and that there would be no formal OEH record of where a harvester is licensed to go. Lachlan said this would make instances of illegal shooting on a property more difficult to identify and increase the burden on compliance investigations. Lachlan enquired if OEH would ask for and maintain a pre-set register from each harvester of all the properties they intended on harvesting on a yearly basis.
- Jackie Letfallah (OEH) explained that the detailed framework around the licensing system pertaining to tags post the review is still in its infancy. However, creating a requirement for a register of properties for each harvester being maintained by OEH may not be in line with actually reducing red tape. It is envisaged that harvesters would still have to obtain landholder permission for access to the property and maintain formal written records. If a harvester was found on a property and could not produce that formal written record, then the harvester would be guilty of trespassing.
- Brad Purcell (OEH) highlighted that the focus of the Kangaroo Management program is to correctly issue the quota. Individual access to tags for landholders is their own private matter. It is up to landholders to foster relationships with harvesters to engage them and gain benefit of their services on their properties.
- Stephen Wolter (OEH) drew reference of a zone based tag system being used in QLD and commented how effectively a non-property specific system works in QLD with reference to Lachlan's landholder concerns.
- Greg Bates (KIAA) asked if the proposed system would require property details to be supplied when reporting what has been culled. Stephen Wolter said that again, it may not necessarily be required as it may not be in line with reduction in red tape and reporting. All of these matters are still dependent upon the review and the creation of the new framework around tags and licensing.

- Lachlan Gall (PAWD) said that he was disappointed by the model presented today pertaining to the removal of the S121 Occupiers licence and non-property specific tags and that it appeared to be in contrast to what was discussed at the last meeting. Lachlan would like to be supplied with more information about the options paper pertaining to the removal of the S121 Occupiers licence. Brad Purcell (OEH) will email all panel members with a document with more information.
- Stephen Wolter (OEH) invited panel members to review the information supplied by Brad Purcell and submit a letter to OEH if they would like to formally raise any concerns.
- Greg Bates (KIAA) was concerned that the new risk based approach may mean that skin only shooting will be identified as prohibited in the next management plan. Greg requested that KMAP members be supplied with literature that KMP will be considering when determining the risk that skin only shooting poses. Greg raised the point that the removal of skin only shooting was due to pressure on low quotas during drought and the current situation is in contrast with no pressure on stable quotas. Therefore he believes there is no reason not to consider including skin only shooting in the next management plan.
- Lachlan Gall (PAWD) confirmed his support for the addition of skin only shooting to be considered in the next management plan. Lachlan commented that from his personal experience that carrion created by skin only shooting is not a problem when the carrion is widely distributed. Lachlan also recounted his own financial experiences in skin only shooting achieving \$9.40 per skin verse a minimum dressed weight carcase achieving \$8 - *noting these prices were from the 1990's.
- Stephen Wolter (KMP) commented that skin only shooting exists in the Queensland management plan and only equates for 5% of the take. Skin only shooting could pose large compliance risks for KMP in a risk based approach framework, however any and all submission including skin only shooting can be submitted for consideration in the next new management plan. The new management plan will go through a full process of review and KMAP will be included in the process of the review.
- Greg Bates (KIAA) enquired if there is a set time frame for this review to be finalised and if any more meetings with KMAP would occur during the process of the review. Stephen Wolter (OEH) indicated that it is not possible to have a definitive timeframe due to it being dependant on political circumstances. However the review is in-line with the Biodiversity Legislation review and we would envisage practical progression by September 2015. Therefore another KMAP meeting mid-year would be appropriate in order to discuss the progression of the review.
- Stephen Wolter (KMP) advised that due to the review OEH will be bringing forward the review of the Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2012 – 2016. KMP is currently a business model in terms of funding. The main costs to the program are the yearly aerial surveys (approximately \$200,000 per annum). KMP will engage with Steve McLeod (DPI KMAP representative) in considering redesign of the surveys to reduce costs whilst remaining a robust scientific database.
- Lachlan Gall (PAWD) commented that PAWD are happy with the current survey design methods and that possibly OEH should reconsider how the Kangaroo Management Program model operates and is funded. Stephen Wolter (KMP) expanded on the funding arrangement and said that returning KMP to a recurrent funding model is another option.

Action 3: Brad to email Greg Bates (KIAA) with a list detailing the members on the Chief Executive Committee of OEH

Action 4: Brad to email panel members with a document summarising information about removal of the S121 Occupiers licence.

Action 5: Brad to email Greg Bates (KIAA) and Lachlan Gall (PAWD) information pertaining to risks created by skin only shooting

Item 5: Other Business

- **Research**

- Lachlan Gall (PAWD) said that shift towards male only shooting driven by the processors has meant that his members have witnessed or been victim of an increase in harvesters illegally entering properties to source male kangaroos. Lachlan would like the trend toward male only shooting focused on with regards to research opportunities. Stephen Wolter (OEH) said that multiple facets of research pertaining to the male only shooting trend would be advantageous.
- Brad Purcell (OEH) mentioned that the RIRDC research report by Steve McLeod (DPI) and Trudy Sharp on the euthanasia methods of joeys, specifically the use of a bolt gun, has been peer reviewed and published in Wildlife Research. Brad Purcell to distribute to KMAP members.
- Brad Purcell (OEH) had been in contact with University of Western Sydney meat quality research scientists about Patrick Medway's (WPSA) request to study meat quality at KMAP #23. UWS scientists were keen but Patrick Medway wanted the research to be conducted at University of Technology, Sydney, alongside the THINKK advocacy group.

Action 6: Brad Purcell will distribute the publication by McLeod and Sharp on welfare of euthenising joeys to all panel members.

Item 6: Updates

- **Meeting with Commonwealth (COP review)**

- Stephen Wolter (OEH) advised that in December 2014 the Commonwealth sent all State Kangaroo Management Plan Managers a letter inviting them participate in a review of the Code of Practice (CoP). So far NSW, QLD and WA have agreed to participate but the Commonwealth is still waiting on response from the other states. Stephen will inform KMAP on the progression of this matter at the next KMAP meeting.
- During the meeting with the Commonwealth, they stated that the department that reviewed and authorised the current CoP has disbanded and a new department will be required to review the new CoP.

- **Extension of KMAP**

- Stephen Wolter (OEH) announced that the Minister for Environment has approved the current Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel to be extended for another 12 months. OEH will send letters out to formally advise of this.

Action 7: Stephen Wolter will send a confirmation letter to all KMAP panel members confirming their 12 month extension on the panel.

List of Actions:

Action 1: Stephen Wolter will send a formal letter to the NSW Harvesters Associate addressing the issues raised by the Harvesters Association in the previous minutes.

Action 2: Stephen will make changes to display of information on graphs on pages 14, 15 & 16 of the annual report

Action 3: Brad to email Greg Bates (KIAA) with a list detailing the members on the Chief Executive Committee of OEH

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